

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8272

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 3840

E.O. 1165-4 GDS

TAGS: PINT, CS

SUBJECT: SAOPIM INVESTIGATION NEARS ITS END

1. ON OCTOBER 1 AND 2 EACH OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
POLITICAL FRACTIONS PARTICIPATING IN THE INVESTIGATING
COMMISSION LOOKING INTO THE MATTER OF PARTIDO
LIBERACION'S (PLN) CAMPAIGN FINANCING METHODS TURNED
IN THEIR REPORTS. THE PLN, NATIONAL INDEPENDENT PARTY,

THE CARTAGO AGRICULTURAL PARTY, AND THE COMMUNISTS
EACH WROTE A SEPARATE REPORT. THE NATIONAL
INDEPENDENT PARTY (PNI), THE DEMOCRATIC RENOVATION
PARTY (PRD), THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY, AND THE REPUBLICAN
PARTY AGREED ON A COMMON POSITION AND SUBMITTED ONE
REPORT. IN ANY EVENT, THE FIVE POSITIONS RECORDED A HIGH
DEGREE OF COINCIDENCE IN THEIR RECOMMENDATIONS THAT THE

TREASURER OF THE PLN, EUGENIO GORDIENKO;
JULIO ECHEVERRIA SAENZ, SAID TO BE INVOLVED IN
MANY OF ODUBER'S PERSONAL BUSINESSES AND ON THE
BOARDS OF THE TWO BANKS ENMESHED IN THE SCANDAL;
AND GASTON KOGAN, EXECUTIVE PRESIDENT OF RECOPE,
BE REMOVED FROM WHATEVER OFFICIAL POSITIONS IN THE
GOVERNMENT THEY NOW HOLD. OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS
CALLED FOR IMPROVEMENT OF CAMPAIGN FINANCING
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LEGISLATION AND CRIMINAL CHARGES TO BE PLACED

AGAINST SOME OF THE INVOLVED POLITICIANS.

2. ODUBER HAS SAID HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD CARRY OUT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE WHEN IT HAD FINISHED REVIEWING THE MATERIAL PRESENTED BY THE INVESTIGATING COMMISSION. IN THE MEANTIME, EX-PRESIDENT FIGUERES HELD A HIGHLY PUBLICIZED LUNCHEON WHICH HE CALLED AN ALMUERZO DESAGRAVIO, WHERE HE APPEARED IN PHOTOS WITH ARMS ON THE SHOULDERS OF THE ACCUSED. THIS APPARENTLY COMPELLED PRESIDENT ODUBER TO GENTLY DISASSOCIATE FIGUERES' COMPORTMENT FROM ANYTHING THE GOPMEFTUFQ# DOING. (SAN JOSE 3836).

3. THERE IS NO DOUBT NOW THAT SOME HEADS WILL ROLL AS A RESULT OF THE SAOPIM AFFAIR. MANY OBSERVERS BELIEVE THAT THERE IS AMPLE CAUSE FOR CRIMINAL CHARGES AGAINST THE THREE HIGH PLN FIGURES AFOREMENTIONED, PLUS LESSER LIGHTS MANUEL PADILLA AND LUIS FELIPE MAYORGA. THIS, HOWEVER, WILL DEPEND NOW ENTIRELY UPON THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S ANALYSIS AND VERDICT, WHICH OF COURSE WILL NOT BE ENTIRELY UNINFLUENCED BY POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS.

4. THE SAOPIM INVESTIGATION AND ITS APPARENT RESULTS HAVE GIVEN NEW STRENGTH AND SPIRIT TO THE ANTI-PLN OPPOSITION AND HAS LEFT THE PLN IN EVEN GREATER DISREPUTE THAN IN THE LAST DAYS OF DON PEPE'S ADMINISTRATION. IT NOW REMAINS TO BE SEEN IF THE GFPLN WITH ITS NARROW ADVANTAGE IN THE NATIONAL ASUWTSY CAN CONTROL THE SURGING OPPOSITION COALITION WHICH SEEMS BENT ON INVESTIGATING EVERYTHING IN TOWN.
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NOTE BY OCT: #AS RECEIVED.
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